

**MINUTES OF THE WOODSTOCK OPERA HOUSE  
ADVISORY COMMISSION  
Tuesday, May 18, 2021**

The meeting of the Advisory Commission of the City of Woodstock was called to order at 4:32 pm by Keith Johnson on Tuesday, August 17, 2021 at Stage Left Café. A roll call was taken.

**I. Call to Order Advisory Members:**

**Present:** Keith Johnson, John Puzzo, Judith Svalander, Sue Kazlusky, Anthony Houston

**Absent:** Paul Rausch

**Staff in Attendance:** Opera House Director Daniel Campbell and Office Assistant Betsy Cosgray

**Others in Attendance:** Theatre 121 president Travis Greuel, Woodstock Fine Arts Association Mary Ellen Prindiville, Jim Prindiville, Off Square Music Treasurer Joe Pesz

**II. Approval of Minutes**

- a. J. Puzzo motioned to approve the May 18, 2021 meeting minutes, J. Svalander seconded. Ayes: K. Johnson, J. Puzzo, J. Svalander, A. Houston and S. Kazlusky. Nays: none. Motion to approve the Tuesday, May 18, 2021 meeting minutes passed.

**III. COMMUNICATIONS**

- a. **Chairman Report – Keith Johnson** deferred to J. Pesz to speak on behalf of Off Square Music. Our organization remains committed to bringing artists and expanding an audience. They recently received the Woodstock Hotel/Motel Grant to fund Sunday in the Park Concerts. They would like to expand to work with downtown businesses for possible restroom usage during outdoor concerts. They are waiting for guidance for upcoming fall events due to the recent uptick in COVID-19 numbers. Responding to a question from J. Svalander, J. Pesz stated many of their events are supported through donations at the door.

b. **Member Reports**

**Judith Svalander – JSOT** had an excellent program on August 6<sup>th</sup>, with over 300 people in attendance; she has been contact-tracing her performers and so far no illnesses reported. They are planning on expanding the one-hour Nutcracker presented last year, with the hopes to be back to a full-length production in 2022. Next year is her 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and her company will be celebrating at each of the shows in March and June with a Gala during their August event. J. Puzzo shared he and his wife had gone to their program this year and it was beautifully done despite the masks.

**Sue Kazlusky – WFAA** will begin their 2021-2022 speaker season in October. Talent showcase was filmed by the Opera House staff and was released at the end of May with the help of the Opera House staff with video production. Due to COVID-19 regulations and children under 12 not being able to be vaccinated, the Children's Program is tentatively scheduled for early spring instead of October. K. Johnson asked how long WFAA has been with the Opera House to which M. Prindiville responded since 1961. Responding to a question from D. Campbell regarding if they need assistance financially, due to not being able to hold their annual fundraiser two years in a row, M. Prindiville responded WFAA is still financially strong.

**John Puzzo – Friends of the Opera House (FOTOH)** hosted an Ice Cream Social on July 21<sup>st</sup> with great success. The membership voted to give a grant to Theatre 121 for their student workshop, which took place the last week in July. They will also host a Members Only Happy Hour on Tuesdays starting in October for those who are Opera House Members. Treasure Island will return for their children's show in January, funded by the FOTOH. They will be handing out t-shirts to the first 75 children attending with I LOVE the OPERA HOUSE printed on them. Tickets are on sale now for the Amazing race-type event presented with Friends of the Public Library and Friends of the Old Courthouse on September 18<sup>th</sup> for \$20 a person. J. Puzzo has been in discussions with BMO Harris regarding sponsoring the Lighting of the Square gala again, as they have done in the past. This is not yet finalized.

**Travis Greuel – Theatre 121** the workshop was fantastic, and well received by the students and parents. Deathtrap auditions are currently happening while Elf auditions will happen before the end of August. Storybook Players, received a grant from the Community Foundation for McHenry County to be able to provide programming to underserved youth. They have already filmed a 20 to 30-minute play and are currently working on post production. They are applying for a grant to assist in paying for this program. T. Greuel asked if the Opera House has plans for vaccination verification. D. Campbell stated they will follow the City's direction, which will continue to monitor and evaluate the situation.

**Anthony Houston – Jazz Fest / Cultural, Arts and Music** hosted a small Jazz Fest on the Square on August 7<sup>th</sup> with around 100 in attendance, which was down from last year, but he pointed out that they were also competing with the county fair. He is hoping to grow the festival next year. They have not decided whether their classes will be in person or virtual this fall.

**c. Managing Director Report – Daniel Campbell** provided a WOH update:

- Reopened on June 12<sup>th</sup> to limited programming, while concentrating on outside events such as City Band and Movies in the Park.
- The OH will host National Theatre Live and Great Artist Movies this fall, beginning in August, with Gaelic Storm performing in August. In September the Opera House will be bringing in a show every weekend on the main stage.
- Sales are down for the productions for the Opera House shows as well as WFAA and Theatre 121.
- Furloughed workers came back in July with a loss of 4 – 5 Limited Part Time staff, in response to a question from A. Houston.
- The Opera House is currently REQUESTING all patrons to wear a mask no matter their vaccination status, a mandate has not been issued yet.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Off Square Music was voted as a new Opera House Resident company at the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. D. Campbell shared the many ways the organization has contributed to Stage Left Café.

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. City Council's Reorganizational Plan –  
In response to questions concerning the City's plans for reorganizing the management structure and the impact on the Opera House, D. Campbell shared the background and history of how the City Council came up with the proposal for the August 17<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. He encouraged the board to read the minutes of the June 3<sup>rd</sup>, and June 28<sup>th</sup> Workshops, as well as the minutes for the July 20<sup>th</sup> and August 3<sup>rd</sup> Council meetings.

(Paul Rausch joined at 5:27)

A general discussion ensued regarding the City's reorganization plans.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

- a. Motion to adjourn by A. Hudson and seconded by P. Rausch. Ayes: K. Johnson, J. Puzzo, J. Svalander, P. Rausch, A. Houston and S. Kazluskys. Nays: none. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm

The next meeting: September 21, 2021

Respectfully submitted,  
Betsy Cosgray